

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 /058 W

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P 160808Z SEP 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6386

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD PRIORITY

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: PREPARATIONS FOR MEMORIAL CEREMONY FOR CHAIRMAN MAO

1. SITUATION IN PEKING AT 1430 HOURS LOCAL SEPTEMBER 16.

2. TIEN AN MEN SQUARE AND CHANG AN STREET ARE THE SCENE OF BUSTLING PREPARATIONS FOR SATURDAY AFTERNOON'S SCHEDULED MEMORIAL RALLY FOR CHAIRMAN MAO. URBAN MILITIA, STANDING TWO DEEP ALONG THE EASTERN APPROACH TO THE SQUARE, CONTINUE CORDONING OFF THE AREA TO PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS BUT PERMITTING VEHICLES TO PASS. A RAISED PLATFORM HAS BEEN ERECTED IN FRONT OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY; IT IS PERHAPS FROM THERE THAT THE EULOGY WILL BE DELIVERED. ON EITHER SIDE AND IN FRONT OF THE PLATFORM THERE HAS BEEN PLACED A VERITABLE FOREST OF GREEN TREES AND PLANTS SYMBOLIC OF IMMORTALITY, WHILE BEHIND THE PLATFORM ABOVE THE ENTRANCE TO THE FORBIDDEN CITY THERE IS A HUGE BLACK AND WHITE PLACARD INSCRIBED "MOURNFULLY COMMEMORATE OUR GREAT LEADER AND TEACHER CHAIRMAN MAO."

3. THE MARTYR'S MONUMENT ACROSS THE SQUARE IS DOMINATED BY ANOTHER

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HUGE BLACK-AND-WHITE PLACARD, THIS ONE INSCRIBED "CARRY OUT THE CAUSE

LEFT BEHIND BY CHAIRMAN MAO AND CARRY THROUGH OUR PROLETARIAN TASKS TO THE END." SCORES OF BUSES ARE PARKED IN THE NORTHEAST QUADRANT OF THE SQUARE, AND THOUSANDS OF MORUNERS WAIT SILENTLY IN NEAT COLUMNS

FOR THEIR TURN TO ENTER THE GREAT HALL AND PAY THEIR LAST RESPECTS. TODAY HAS BEEN SET ASIDE FOR, AMONG OTHERS, TEACHER AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES, AND SEVERAL BLOCKS TO THE WEST OF THE GREAT HALL HIGH SCHOOLERS LINED UP APPARENTLY TO MARCH TO THE SQUARE. APPROXIMATELY THIRTY RED FLAG LIMOUSINES WERE PARKED IN FRONT OF THE GREAT HALL.

4. THREE MOBILE TELEVISION CAMERAS RECORDED THE SCENE.

5. FOR SEVERAL BLOCKS TO THE EAST AND WEST OF TIEN AN MEN ALONG CHANG AN STREET THERE ARE ACTIVE PREPARATIONS FOR THE MASSES WHO WILL ASSEMBLE FOR THE THREE O'CLOCK CEREMONY. WORKERS ARE DEMARCATING ASSIGNED AREAS ALONG THE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS WITH PAINT;

OUTDOOR WATER FOUNTAINS AND SPIGOTS, NEWLY INSTALLED, ARE BEING TESTED; AND IRON FRAMEWORKS -- PROBABLY INTENDED FOR BICYCLE PARKING -- HAVE BEEN ASSEMBLED ON SIDEWALKS AT REGULAR INTERVALS. ALL OF THIS POINTS TO A HUGE AND QUITE LENGTHY FAREWELL TO THE CHAIRMAN. GATES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEATHS, STATE FUNERALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PEKING01852
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760349-0519
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760953/aaaabtif.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <20 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PREPARATIONS FOR MEMORIAL CEREMONY FOR CHAIRMAN MAO
TAGS: PINT, PDIP, CH, (MAO TSE-TUNG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006